

The Library Assistant:

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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The 29th Inaugural Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 24th, at the London School of Economics and Political Science (Room 9), Houghton Street, Aldwych, W.C.2. **Victor Branford, Esq., M.A.**, of the Sociological Society, will address the Association on "Poetry and Environment." It is hoped that Sir William Beveridge, K.C.B., will preside.

This meeting will be preceded by a visit to the Record Office, Chancery Lane, arranged through the courtesy of Hilary Jenkinson, Esq., at 4 p.m. Members will make their own arrangements between the two meetings.

For the afternoon of this date a football match has also been arranged between members of the Association, and will take place at Marsh Lane Depot, Church Road, Leyton. The kick-off will probably be at 2.45 p.m., and representatives of the Bethnal Green, Battersea, West Ham, Walthamstow, Stepney and Hackney Libraries will take part.

Full details will be sent prior to the match to all members who have notified their willingness to play, and any member wishing for particulars may obtain them on application.

Tram routes 81, 57, and 55, and bus routes 38, 38A, 35, pass near the ground. Alight at Markhouse Road, and Church Road is exactly opposite. Non playing members wishing to attend should notify me and I will endeavour to arrange to have some guides on duty for their benefit.

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Other arrangements for the Session include the following:—
Wednesday, November 21st.—St. George-in-the-East Public Library, 236, Cable Street, E.1. Address: "NATURE STUDY MUSEUMS," by Percy W. Horn, Curator, Stepney Museums.

The chair will be taken by Albert Cawthorne, F.L.A., Chief Librarian, Stepney.

Wednesday, December 12th.—Central Library, Town Hall, High Street South, East Ham. "REQUIREMENTS OF LIBRARY BINDING," by Philip C. Bursill, F.L.A., Chief Librarian, Woolwich. William Bridle, F.L.A., Borough Librarian, East Ham, presiding.

Wednesday, January 23rd.—Central Library, Fulham. "CHILDREN'S LIBRARIES AT HOME AND ABROAD," by Miss G. Rees, F.L.A., Fulham. James E. Walker, F.L.A., Chief Librarian, will preside.

Wednesday, February 20th.—Gt. Smith Street Library, Westminster. Discussion: "OPEN ACCESS: IS IT A FAILURE?" To be opened by members of the Croydon Libraries staff. Chairman, Frank Pacy, Chief Librarian, Westminster.

Wednesday, March 24th.—Deptford Central Library, Lewisham High Road, S.E.14. "THE PUBLIC LIBRARY MOVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA," by Miss Tupman (Johannesburg). F. J. Peplow, F.L.A., Borough Librarian, Deptford, will take the chair.

All meetings commence at 7.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated, and fuller details will appear from month to month.

It is hoped that the April and May meetings will include afternoon outings. Particulars will appear later.

The Annual Meeting in June will be held at Woolwich, and an afternoon visit to one of the "Bay" steamships of the Commonwealth Line, by invitation of the Company, has been arranged.

The following fixtures for the **Junior Section** are to hand:—

November 21st.—"ART IN THE LIBRARY," by R. Smith (St. Pancras).

December 12th.—"THE LIBRARY PROFESSION AND ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS," by P. Meachaen (Bethnal Green).

January 23rd.—DISCUSSION ON L.A. EXAMINATION PAPERS, DECEMBER, 1923.

February 20th.—"PROS. AND CONS. OF THE OPEN ACCESS SYSTEM." Miss Baxter and Miss Cruikshank (Fulham).

March 24th.—"THE FEMININE OUTLOOK." Miss M. Harris (Bethnal Green).

The meetings of the Junior Section precede the general meetings by half an hour, and present an opportunity for our younger members to express their opinions on professional matters. It is hoped that many more will avail themselves of it.

EDITORIALS.

Our Slogan.—"A membership of 1,000." This is what we hope to accomplish as a result of the propaganda work now going on over the length and breadth of the country through the Association of Assistant Librarians. We publish a long list of new members this month, and hope that it may be the forerunner of still longer ones. We look forward to the time when *no* assistant librarian shall consider it dignified to remain outside our ranks. Remember that many of the better conditions of service which we enjoy to-day have been brought about directly by the efforts of this Association. It is felt by the Council that if we have at this stage in the library movement the full backing and support of the profession there may be many vital ways in which we may help to mould the future of the library service. The Honorary Secretary, Mr. Gurner P. Jones, B.A., Public Library, Bancroft Road, London, E., will be happy to send particulars and forms of membership upon request.

Next Council Meeting.—The next meeting of the Council will be held at the National Library for the Blind on Wednesday, October 10th, at 7 p.m.

Hours and Conditions.—It is time for a new enquiry into the hours and conditions of service, and we hope that ourselves or the Library Association will undertake the work at the earliest opportunity. We note with pleasure and appreciation from the current report of the Birmingham Public Libraries Committee, which also summarises the principal work since the last printed report was issued for 1915-16, that "in April, 1919, the working hours of the staff were reduced from 48 to 42 per week, and arrangements made by which all assistants left at 5 o'clock on two evenings a week instead of 6 o'clock on one evening only. In making this reduction of hours, the Committee took into consideration the necessity of granting more leisure to the staff to enable them to study for the Library Association examinations, and at a later date the acquisition of a certain number of certificates by junior assistants was made a condition of retention on the staff."

There are libraries where the bad old system of three or four "full days" still prevails, resulting in a working week of 48, 50 and even more hours a week, and we unhesitatingly condemn such hours as both unnecessary and unjust.

Even in the most favourable circumstances a library assistant's hours must be spread over a long period, and it is only reasonable to expect that the ill-effects of this shall be minimised as far as possible by the adoption of a working week of not more than 42 hours. Some library committees indeed require even less. The higher qualifications that are being demanded provides an unanswerable case for following Birmingham's—and others—example.

Credit for Work Well Done.—We have received a copy of the *Norwich Reader's Guide* containing a very useful "Catalogue of Books in French and of Works on French Literature." The catalogue has been compiled by Miss Mary Alexander of the Library staff, and graceful recognition is made of the fact. The compiler is a member of the A.A.L., and is one of the very few people who have passed the Literary History Examination of the Library Association "with honours." We wish that there was a more general expression of such appreciation on the part of library authorities for special pieces of work well done.

The National Library of Wales and Salaries.—Our attention has been called to the conditions attaching to the appointment of a cataloguing assistant in the National Library of Wales. Applicants were required to be competent to catalogue printed books in all divisions of the general library, and to submit satisfactory evidence of their ability to do so. We gather further from the Application Form that the person appointed must be educated, have some knowledge of other languages, perhaps of Welsh too, and have had previous experience in library work. For all this—including the ability to catalogue—the salary offered is—£150, without even any mention of increments or possibility of promotion. For the sake of librarianship we are sorry to know that a library calling itself a "National Library" can do no better than this.

Recognition.—Perhaps it is a sign of the changed attitude of those in high places towards libraries and librarianship that Mrs. Duff Brown has been awarded a pension of £50 from the Civil List in recognition of the services of the late James Duff Brown to the public library movement.

Publicity.—Libraries continue to receive a wide publicity in the press, and before us are cuttings summarising a year's work of particular library authorities, recording the adoption of the open-access system, notes on the higher tone of reading now current, and a long article from *The Morning Post* on the work of the British Museum Library. We welcome all this as evidence of the better favour in which the library movement finds itself to-day.

Open-Access.—Open-access is rapidly becoming general. From the cuttings referred to above we learn that the system has been introduced lately at three more of the Birmingham libraries, at Gravesend, and at an Edinburgh Branch Library. *The Daily Telegraph* also devotes a long article to Popular Reading, in which reference is made to the first year's working of the system at Great Smith Street.

The Honorary Secretary's Marriage.—In accordance with the wish expressed by several members of the Association, it is proposed to offer to Mr. Gurner P. Jones some expression of our good wishes on the occasion of his marriage, as recorded in our last issue. Contributions, which should not exceed half a crown a head, should be

sent to the Honorary Treasurer, Mr. R. Cooper, Public Library, Lavender Hill, London, S.W.11. Smaller contributions will be equally welcome, as it is wished to make the gift thoroughly representative of the whole Association.

A Scottish Central Library for Students.—We have been favoured with a copy of the Transactions of a Conference recently held in Stirling under the auspices of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trustees in connection with the establishment of a Scottish Central Library for Students, similar to the one which has done such useful work in London during the past few years. Some interesting papers were read, and those who have access to the document will be well-advised to peruse it. All the papers are interesting, but the one which is likely to be of the widest appeal is that by Mr. E. A. Savage on "Co-operation between Municipal and Rural Libraries." We are all interested in co-operation, and the more of it we can get, the better for the library movement.

The following is a brief summary of the working of the new Central Library.

All applications from residents in places where a Public Library rate is levied must be made through the librarian, or other person appointed by the Library Committee. The importance of this regulation lies in the fact that the system is intended to supplement the stocks of serious literature which Public Libraries can reasonably afford to buy—not in any way to supersede these stocks, or to render unnecessary the purchase of serious works in future.

As in rural areas, so in the case of libraries in very small places where a substantial collection of serious literature is economically impossible, the only charge will be that of postage. In the larger places, there will be an additional charge of 5 per cent. on the price of the book. The purpose of this charge is to prevent library committees from unconsciously allowing their purchases of serious books to dwindle below a reasonable standard, and thus allowing their stocks to stagnate.

The scheme is to hold good for a year (from October 1st, 1928), by which time the Trustees and Library Committee will be in a position to judge whether it is sound from all points of view.

The Trustees will buy books as required. Fiction and juvenile books are, of course, excluded. Books in foreign languages are not provided unless there is no adequate English book on the subject. The latest authoritative work is supplied, as a rule, in preference to books which, having been superseded, have a merely antiquarian interest. Ordinary text-books are not supplied. Works costing less than 6s. are excluded on the ground that some minimum limit must be imposed, and books costing less than this sum are not as a rule of the calibre which the library is designed to supply.

The term "Student" is to be understood in its wide sense as denoting all adults who are studying serious subjects. Books ordinarily required by pupils in schools and colleges are rarely supplied, since it is generally to be assumed that they should possess their own textbooks or borrow them from the libraries of the institutions in which they are studying.

The Trustees reserve to themselves sole discretion as to whether any given book comes within the purview of their scheme. It will be found, however, once the scope of the scheme is understood, that few applications will be refused.

Librarians will be required to certify in each case that :—

- (1) The applicant is *bona fide* entitled to borrow books from the local public library.
- (2) The book required is not in stock or likely to be added in the near future.

Duplicate copies of books in large demand are readily bought as required. In other cases when a book is on loan, readers will be asked to wait till it is returned. If, therefore, a book is urgently required for immediate study, librarians should certify that even a month's delay would make the book useless.

Armstrong College Library.—As a result of the recent decision of the Council of Armstrong College to build a College Library, all practising members of the Northern Architectural Association, and a few architects in other parts of the country, were invited to submit competitive designs for the building. Thirty-two designs were received, and Mr. H. Martineau Fletcher, M.A., F.R.I.B.A., who was appointed assessor, has now issued his award as follows :—First premium, Mr. A. Dunbar Smith, 6, Queen's Square, Bloomsbury, W.C.; second premium, Mr. W. G. Newton, M.A., 4, Raymond Buildings, Gray's Inn, W.C.1; third premium, Messrs. Mauchlen and Weightman, 2, Collingwood Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Many of the designs submitted are of great merit, and the whole collection is of interest as a series of solutions of the problem of providing precisely the type of accommodation required in a University Library.

In accordance with the terms of competition and award, Mr. A. Dunbar Smith has been appointed architect of the Library, and work will proceed forthwith. The building will consist of a reading-room seating 122 readers, storage space for 175,000 volumes with accommodation for 55 research students, administrative rooms, and photographic laboratory. It is so designed that additional storage space for 60,000 volumes may be added when required. A beginning has thus been made to a scheme, the realisation of which will not only fill a long and sorely-felt gap in the equipment of Armstrong College, but should prove an inspiration both to teaching and to learning within the College, and, by the opportunities it will afford to all researchers and

students in letters and science, a notable factor in the commercial, industrial and intellectual life of the community.

The librarian of the new building will be Mr. Frederick Bradshaw, M.A., D.Sc., who was appointed to the position two years ago. The sub-librarian is Mr. Edwin Patterson, Chairman of the North-Eastern Division of the Association of Assistant Librarians, who was trained in the Newcastle Public Libraries.

The new Library will be open not only to members of the College, but to all teachers and others engaged upon scientific and educational research. It will be a "Scholars'" library, and is intended to form a link between the Public Library and the private library. Already a system of interchange is working between the Public Library, the local Institutional Libraries, and the University Library.

The new Library will be organised on the most modern lines, the plan of the building, however, being designed to suit the special requirements of a University Library.

The method of classification will be the Dewey system. The catalogue will be on cards.

It is hoped to commence building early in October.

The John Rylands Library.—Alderman Abbott, chairman of the Manchester Libraries Committee, has been appointed a representative of the Corporation on the Board of Governors of the John Rylands Library, in place of the late Sir Thomas Shann.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.*

By ROBERT COCHRAN, Librarian, Walton and Fazakerley Branch Library, Liverpool.

It is the customary procedure for an incoming President to devote his remarks to a consideration of professional questions generally. Therefore I wish, briefly, to review the development, present position, and future possibilities of the public library movement.

It is seventy-three years since the first Act of Parliament to enable public libraries to be established, was introduced and sanctioned, and despite the provisions of this and subsequent Acts, there still remained at the close of the last century many districts untouched by the movement.

Then came a great forward move. During the last two decades public libraries have been springing up all over the country, not only in municipalities, but also in connection with county areas. With the growth of communities and the formation of new districts, the branch library came into existence, and has been steadily growing both in numbers and in usefulness.

*Delivered at the Annual Meeting of the North-Western Division of the Association of Assistant Librarians at Liverpool, September 26th, 1923.

Moreover, the "Open Access" principle has now completely emerged from the atmosphere of controversy to become the more or less accepted method; Commercial and Technical Libraries are asserting their importance; and the Children's Department is now justly recognised as an essential part of a modern public library system.

But the two great events of more recent years are the work of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust (in succession to the personal efforts of the late Dr. Andrew Carnegie) and the passing of the Act of 1919.

The achievements of the former demand more than a passing reference. Dr. Carnegie and the Trust have made grants for the building of public libraries to such an extent that there is hardly a district which has not benefited in some measure or other; and latterly the Trust (carrying on the work of its founder) has specialised in the provision of rural library schemes. A sum of £250,000 has been ear-marked for grants to libraries, covering a period terminating in 1925; and the Trust has promised to provide the capital outlay for every county in Great Britain which has not yet adopted a pioneer scheme under the auspices of the Trustees.

The work of the Trust has been and is concerned merely with the foundation of libraries, and not with their maintenance; and as the movement generally grew it became more and more evident that the great obstacle to real progress was the matter of financial restriction. This paved the way for the Act of 1919, which, by removing the rate limitation, and thus offering tremendous opportunities for the future, is by far the greatest achievement in the history of the public library movement.

It has been said that the first effect of this Act was a healing one. During the period of the War, the usefulness of public libraries became seriously impaired. Owing to the decreased purchasing power of their income, many libraries were compelled to become in debt. Others were forced to reduce expenditure in books, both new and replacements, and binding had to be severely restricted. Further, repairs and decorations had to be postponed and the work generally curtailed; with the result that on the passing of the Act, arrears of work had to receive first consideration, so that progressive work had to be further postponed.

Then other factors came into operation: economic forces and public opinion. Only when the former are adjusted and the latter cultivated can real progress be hoped for.

Rate limitation, then, is now a thing of the past, but trade depression, and the desire for economy on the part of local authorities have, for the time being, destroyed our hopes for better conditions.

It is assumed by many that when trade revives and more settled conditions prevail in the industrial world, our work will also benefit and advance; and although I do not wish to appear pessimistic, I

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certainly consider that something more than this is needed to ensure progress.

We are told that there is a greater demand for opportunities for education and culture than ever before ; and that in many cases the desire for intellectual improvement is latent, only waiting to be aroused.

There is, undoubtedly, a demand for literature, evident on every hand, which the public library should, but does not always, meet. An instance of this is to be found in the attempts made by various factories and workshops to form libraries for the benefit of their employees ; and in many cases this is done in districts which possess public libraries. Employers are feeling responsible for the further education of their workpeople. They are responding to the evident need for higher education amongst their employees, and, be it noted, are paying particular attention to the wants of the adolescent. This work is usually carried on in conjunction with the Industrial Welfare Society, which has organised a book service department, from which books are loaned to workshops, to be distributed under the guidance of the welfare worker.

In one or two cases there is co-operation between the public library and the workshop, but generally speaking the work is the monopoly of the Industrial Welfare Society. This can only be considered an indictment of public library work ! This Society is alive to the needs of those engaged in industrial pursuits, and is doing work which we have failed to do. Here we seem, by our inaction, to be recording a retrogressive step. Are we as a profession tackling the problem at all, or, if we are, are we tackling it along right lines ?

Then there is the important matter of School Libraries. Many schools—particularly the type described as secondary, and including Junior Technical Institutes—possess libraries which are provided and, of course, maintained out of the Education Rate. I am not referring to the provision of text-books required for class-work exclusively, but to collections of general literature. Here again we find that only a small, almost negligible, number of schools possess libraries supplied and controlled by the public library authority. Surely this is work which can be done much more satisfactorily and economically by public libraries, which possess the needful machinery for dealing with it ?

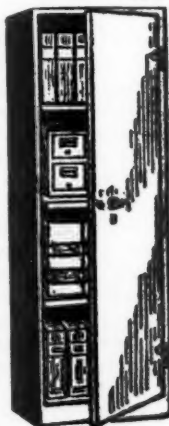
A statement made recently by a school master who was also the librarian of his school library is significant. He said that " for years we have slowly built up a private library to make up for the deficiencies of the public one." He also remarked " that some librarians thought more of schemes than of culture."

Remarks like these not only make us realise how urgent is the demand for an easily available and adequate supply of books, but also emphasise the need for some system of co-ordination.

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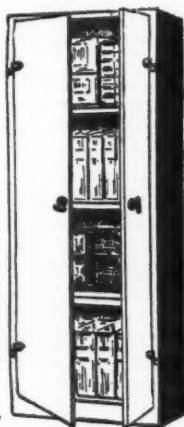
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After all, our work in connection with children generally is really only in the initial stage. More and more attention will have to be devoted in the future to the important matter of introducing children—by some system of guiding, by Story Hours, and by Talks—to the realm of literature. It is essential that children's reading should be wisely directed and cultivated during the impressionable years of their lives; and who are more qualified than those members of our profession—who are not only lovers of books, but also of child life, and who are specially trained for the purpose—to undertake the duty of creating in the youthful mind that love of books which alone makes habitual readers.

As a natural sequel to this work is the matter of suitable and special provision for the adolescent, for that period when the child ceases, on attaining the age of fourteen, to be a member of the junior department, and so becomes eligible for the adult library; and with the creation of Junior Technical Schools and the increasing demand for continuation classes, both technical and general, new and important avenues of service are opened.

An experiment was tried some time ago in connection with a continuation school, when a Librarian was invited to visit the school and briefly address the students in the various classes on the value of the public library and the method of registration. This was followed by the display on the school notice board of an annotated list of books contained in the library dealing with the subjects taught at the school. The results were highly gratifying. The idea here briefly outlined is just indicative of the great scope there is for work in connection with continuation schools.

Without entering into the controversial question of School Libraries generally, as to whether it is more advantageous to place a selection of books at the school for distribution by a teacher acting as librarian, or to require the students to attend at the library to obtain the books they require, the fact remains that the principle of co-operation is not so effective or so complete as it might be, particularly in regard to the type of school which has been specified.

Then there is another, and possibly the most important of our immediate difficulties, the one on the solution of which the others naturally depend. It is a notorious fact that there is a certain section of the public who class public libraries as luxuries, and who fail to realise, not only the nature of the work we are doing, but also the possibilities of that work under satisfactory conditions. One can, in a sense, appreciate the frame of mind of such people as these, when we recall the days when schools were referred to in much the same way. But enthusiastic educationalists tackled the problem of converting the public to a due recognition of their claims. True, their difficulties were not so great as ours are, for education became compulsory, and had behind it the authority of Parliament. But we, too,

have to convert the public to a recognition of the fact that the public library supplies a vital need, and that it forms an integral part of the vast educational machinery of the nation. To characterise libraries as luxuries is not only inaccurate but misleading. Public libraries have developed alongside the educational system of the country. The enquiry instituted in the early days which culminated in the first Act of Parliament, considered that the fundamental reason for the provision of public libraries was because this country was far behind Continental nations in the matter of public education, and that the furtherance of the education of the masses would be advanced by this means; and although successive Acts have altered and extended the powers conferred by the original Act, the *raison d'être* for the existence of public libraries remains the same. They are educational institutions: their predominant function is to provide the means of education for the people of to-day.

I am not using the term education in a narrow or restricted sense, but in its wider interpretation—not as the mere acquisition of knowledge—but as something more spiritual. Education is not an end in itself, but only a means to an end; and so its ultimate outcome is happiness—in the doing of things and in the possession of them. As Ruskin puts it: "The object of true education is to make people not merely do the right things, but enjoy the right things"; and no one had a loftier conception than he of the value of the book as a factor in education, or of the part which the public library can play in its development.

Now, those who are able to read the signs of the times, realise that there are possibilities of a great awakening in regard to our movement. The time for converting the public was never more opportune than it is to-day. "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune," may aptly be applied to our movement at this period of its history.

The Library Association is alive to these indications. They have formed a Publicity Committee, and its influence is already manifesting itself; and in the awakening of the public appreciation the junior association can and must play its part. It is a golden opportunity for missionary enterprise, to educate the public, not only the adults, but also and particularly the children and the adolescent, who are the public of the morrow.

What line of action can be adopted? Firstly, the need for Publicity of every description is a means which has great potentialities. Mr. Walter Briscoe truly states that "If necessity is the Mother of Invention, then Publicity is the Father of Popularity."

The aims of the Publicity Committee of the L.A. might with advantage be quoted, viz. :—

"To endeavour (by every means practicable) to influence public

opinion to realise the necessity, importance, and value of public libraries in the educational and social welfare of the nation."

"To direct public attention to the fact that the work of public libraries has invariably been hindered by lack of adequate financial support, and that the present cry for 'economy' should not be permitted to starve such institutions, and stifle their progress."

Time will not permit of an examination of publicity methods. They are well-known to all. But the point is this, that they are essential in order to convert the public regarding the scope and importance of our work, for only when people believe in public libraries as they do in schools and universities, then and not till then, will we receive that measure of recognition which is essential for the successful carrying on of our work.

Firstly, then, the need for Publicity; and secondly, and most importantly, the results accruing from the attitude of the members of our profession in their relationship to each other and to the public.

The claims of the Association of Assistant Librarians should be patent to all. Its value, not only for purposes of social intercourse and for the provision of educational facilities, highly important as these are, but also for the wider purpose of stimulating enthusiasm, needs to be emphasised.

I have purposely refrained from making any special reference to the need for education, both technical and general, as a means whereby the status of our profession can be raised, because, in view of the general attention it has recently received from both speakers and writers on professional subjects, its importance is or should be fully realised by all.

We must as an Association be not only representative but embrative. How can we hope to convert the public if we are ourselves unconverted? You will doubtless recall the observation of a certain University Provost, in reply to a request that "librarians should be given the same concessions, in connection with matriculation, that are given to accountants, dentists, and similar persons," that, in his opinion, "the library profession is not organised and that such a request would be more properly made in five years' time." That observation speaks for itself; and it certainly supports the contention that unity in our ranks is an essential quality.

There are many advantages in association: it brings together those of like interests, so that by a mutual interchange of views we can improve the profession to which we belong. One, and the fundamental, reason for the existence of our Association, is that "by concerted action we can attain to a greater state of efficiency in the public service."

In this connection we cannot ignore the question of Registration which is now beginning to materialise, and which will have far-reaching consequences. It is not a new question. It was very fully discussed as long ago as 1907, when a committee of the Library

Association went into the matter of a Professional Register for librarianship. For some reason or other the matter was dropped, but recently it has undergone the process of resurrection. Registration will affect every member of our profession; and the Association of Assistant Librarians must have a clearly defined policy in regard to it, particularly as to who shall or shall not be included in the original Register. Therefore, it must be empowered to speak for the whole body of assistant librarians.

This brings me to the consideration of my next point—our attitude in regard to the public service. Alongside of the educational equipment of the assistant must be cultivated the spirit of enthusiasm. Remember, we cannot expect full recognition until we merit it; and the measure of success achieved is gauged entirely by the amount of effort put forth. Preparation is essential in every business or profession; but without enthusiasm and a desire to serve, what use is that preparation?

This is idealism, if you will, but idealism always pays. The man with an ideal always goes far, even if he does not win through. Forgive me if I am inclined to labour this point; but am I not justified in stating that there is a tendency to become too mechanical in our profession: too dependent on mechanical devices and to ignore the importance of the human element—the personal touch? No one appreciates more than I do the value of an elaborately compiled catalogue, or the importance of a closely classified scheme with requisite guides in a modern public library; but these can never compare in effectiveness to the efficient, helpful and willing assistant.

Is there not a need, in our present educational curriculum, for the inclusion of the subject of the "Ethics of Librarianship"? Let me quote two rules from a recent article on this subject by an American Librarian. The writer stipulates that "we must be loyal to our profession" and that "we must be loyal to the ideals of our profession." The Americans have been preaching this doctrine for some time, but we in this country have been devoting so much of our energy towards the removal of the rate limitation and to making up our minds on the advisability or otherwise of "Open Access" that the question has had, inevitably, to take a subordinate place, if it has not been completely ignored. Now, however, that these matters have been adjusted, the time is ripe for emphasising this essential teaching.

Surely, we have every reason to be proud of our profession and to be loyal to its ideals. It is a profession which can affect the intellectual welfare of the country to an inestimable degree; and its opportunities for service are incalculable. Mr. Henry Guppy, referring to the attractions of a librarian's calling, stated that he knew of no other vocation or calling so full of intellectual variety; and "that the librarian's ambition should be to find genuine joy in helping those who come to him for assistance among books—in so doing he would give

to the library its true place as an educating and elevating agency, and make it indeed a centre of light and learning."

There are indications that competition in every walk of life will be keen in the future ; and the public library must play its part in the preparation of those who will be the competitors. It must justify its existence. Not only must our institutions be fully equipped—a constant supply of books, both new and replacements, technical and general literature kept up-to-date, binding regularly attended to, and possess the various mechanical adjuncts indispensable for efficiency—but also adequately staffed by those who believe in their work, and whose ideal is that of service for the common good.

Finally, we may quote the public library as being the "Working Man's University"—and the designation has become somewhat threadbare—until it almost becomes an offence ; but, to quote an American colleague, "we must now have the courage, not only to state, but to prove our faith."

LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE AT EASTBOURNE, 21st SEPTEMBER, 1923.

The Eastbourne Borough Authorities fully deserved the congratulations showered upon them for the capital local programme which was enhanced by all sorts of courteous attentions and thoughtful arrangements, which, trifling in themselves, yet made the stay one to be remembered.

The Mayoral Reception of Monday evening took place in the Town Hall, and was attended by over 400 delegates and friends. An excellent programme of music was provided, and the occasion afforded what was the most valuable part of the Conference, the opportunity of renewing old friendships and the interchange of ideas.

The Conference proper commenced on Tuesday morning at 10.15, when the delegates were officially welcomed by the Mayor (Councillor G. B. Soddy). The retiring President (Mr. J. Ballinger, C.B.E., M.A.), then gave place to the new President, the Marquis of Hartington, who warned librarians against adopting too much of the "high brow" spirit and elaborated the following message received from the President of the Board of Education (the Rt. Hon. E. Wood, M.P.) :—

"Education can teach us nothing more important than that on leaving the school or the university and entering the larger school of public life we are only beginning the lifelong task of educating ourselves.

"Our schools, indeed, have taught us very little unless they have given us that impulse towards self-education which is acquired from a life of reading and a habit of turning to books for the pleasure to be got from them.

"For this reason I welcome most warmly the efforts of an Association whose aim it is to promote the establishment of libraries throughout the kingdom; for the public library is the essential complement of any system of State education.

"By providing not only books on special or technical subjects, but also literature which is worth reading and is read for our own pleasure, the public library may become for many of us a university, and it is a university that fortunately we need never leave."

In rising to second a vote of thanks to the incoming President for his address, Mr. E. F. Stevens, Delegate from the A.L.A., and Librarian of the Pratt Institute Free Library, Brooklyn, N.Y., received a very cordial reception. He extended to the conference the congratulations of our brethren across the seas, and secured the keen attention of his audience by a breezy speech which was all too brief. Members then settled down to a paper on "The Reference Library," by Mr. Walter Powell, Chief Librarian of Birmingham. As a contribution to the subject it was disappointing. The modern reference library was not defined, no new points were raised, and the opinions expressed were those of one whose whole life had been spent in the library system of a big city, without first hand knowledge of, and little sympathy with, the needs and peculiar position of the smaller towns. The speaker advocated the scrapping of all incomplete reference libraries in the smaller towns and the extension of the lending library. Odd volumes of the "Annual Register" and the "Rolls series" he suggested were worse than useless. We are convinced that the needs of the smaller towns are identical with those of the big cities, only in a different degree. Mr. Powell's contention that many reference libraries throughout the country are mere accumulations of obsolete books and incomplete sets is undoubtedly correct, but the condition is not peculiar to small libraries.

In the afternoon Miss Joan Wake, Honorary Secretary, Northants Record Society, read a most interesting paper on "The Science and Romance of old MSS." Miss Wake pleaded for more collaboration in the preservation of MSS. and repeated the frequently heard complaint of the numerous documents lost to posterity through carelessness and lack of interest in their preservation. The following resolution, supported by Mr. H. R. Tedder and Dr. H. Guppy was passed unanimously:—

"It is urgently necessary that steps should be taken to secure and preserve for historical study muniments from private collections as are in danger of destruction or dispersal owing to the sale of landed estates; and, further, that co-operation between public libraries, local record societies, as well as university and kindred institutions engaged in historical research, is desirable for that purpose."

Miss Wake was followed by Mr. J. G. Wilson, of the Society of Bookman, who pleaded for better relations and closer co-operation between booksellers and libraries in a paper entitled "A question of better relations."

The Presidential Reception took place on Tuesday evening at Devonshire Park when a large and brilliant company, including the civic party, enjoyed a full evening's programme of music and dancing. The Floral Hall was beautifully decorated for the occasion, and the arrangements were a complete success.

Those who had the privilege of hearing Mr. H. M. Vaughan, M.A., at Cardiff last year, welcomed his excellent paper on "Samuel Butler," which was the first item at the Wednesday morning session. With Dr. Guppy and others who took part in the discussion we shall go back to the author of "Erewhon" with renewed interest. Members of the conference are grateful to Mr. Vaughan for copies of his paper which were distributed after the meeting.

Dr. A. Mansbridge, M.A., opened a discussion on the Interim Report of a Joint Committee of the L.A. and the British Institution of Adult Education on "Public Libraries and Adult Education." The Report contained a summary of the methods already adopted by the majority of the public libraries of bringing books to the student. Mr. T. H. Searles, Secretary of the British Institution of Adult Education, outlined the policy of the Institution, and the discussion was continued by Mr. L. S. Jast, and others.

Wednesday afternoon turned out very wet for the excursion to Battle Abbey, though quite a large number took part. A variety of attractions claimed the attention of delegates in the evening, not a few succumbing to the thrills offered by the "Cat and the Canary" at the Devonshire Theatre. The principal boxes were occupied by a distinguished company, including two Vice-Presidents of the L.A. Another Vice-President led an attack on the "Tivoli" cinema theatre, in search no doubt of an antidote for the "High brow-ism" against which the noble Marquis had warned them.

Those who felt the call of the sea met Dr. Mansbridge at 8.30 p.m. to discuss various methods of co-operation in connection with the work of furthering adult education among merchant seamen; Messrs. Pitt and Cawthorne took part in the discussion.

The subject of "County Library Experiments; some notes on the Conferences at Stirling and Dublin," was dealt with on Thursday morning by Lt.-Col. J. M. Mitchell, O.B.E., M.C., M.A., Secretary of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, whose election this year as a Vice-President of the Association will meet with general approval.

He first dealt with the development of the library movement in Ireland and the establishment in Scotland of a Central Library for Students to deal solely with that country's requirements. Col. Mitchell suggested a series of reforms, chief amongst which was

the creation of a "Great central lending library acting as a super-pool to supply the reasonable needs of those whose studies transcend the financial capacity of the district, the urban, and county library, and who cannot travel to London or any other big centre." He made a strong case for the adequate provision of books in the rural areas where he stated there was a serious demand for them.

The annual dinner of the Association was held on Thursday evening at the Cavendish Hotel. It was a most enjoyable function and was well attended, not a few finding a difficulty in securing a seat. In the absence of the President, Mr. Ballinger presided, and after the loyal toast had been honoured called upon various gentlemen to speak to the usual toasts. "The Library Association" was proposed by the Rev. G. M. Hanks, M.A., in a speech of a very high order and was replied to by the Chairman. He was followed by others just as regardless of the famous dictum that "brevity is the soul of wit," with the result that the American delegate's reply to "The Guests," proposed by Mr. Pacy, had to be curtailed. Many of the members present would like to have heard more of Dr. E. F. Stevens.

In the course of the evening, Councillor McGowan, Chairman of the Public Libraries Committee, Glasgow, extended a very cordial invitation to the Association to hold their Conference in that city in 1924, and the suggestion was agreed to with acclamation.

What is usually the most interesting part of the Conference proved to be almost destitute of excitement. The officers of the Association very skilfully got rid of Mr. Tapley Soper's motion advocating that steps be taken to secure representation on the Standing Joint Committee of the N.A.L.G.O., by declaring it illegal almost before he had had a chance to put it; this after he had given proper notice of motion and allowing it to be printed and circulated in the official programme!

There was the slightest suggestion of trouble when Mr. Doubleday (Hampstead) moved that "The Council of the L.A. be requested to consider what steps could be taken to promote the formation of an association of the professional members of the L.A., and to report upon the matter at the next Annual Meeting of the Association." There the matter can be left for the time being but we have little sympathy with the motion as it stands. No good can come of splitting up the parent Association into various groups. The whole business of the agenda was disposed of within an hour, leaving the members free to enjoy an hour or so on the pier after such a strenuous Conference!

The Exhibition of books was very useful indeed. There did not appear to be much value, however, in allocating so much room

to second-hand booksellers' stalls. The space so occupied would have been better employed by an extension of the trade show so as to include the publications of such important houses as Macmillan, the University Presses, Longman, and so on.

"F. L. A."

NEW MEMBERS.

Misses E. Z. Slorach, L. Dowse, F. Smith, M. Hall, W. Hall, A. R. Preater, E. L. Minde, D. H. Jenkins, L. M. Ranscombe, A. M. Spalding, B. M. Harris, M. Jefferson, E. A. Powlesland, F. Willington, E. A. Wilshire (Hackney), Misses A. Hastings, W. Baker, A. Barwood, Messrs. S. E. Easingwood, F. Warner, H. B. Otter (Battersea); James A. King (Royal Statistical Society); Miss Alice Dold (Bury).

Associates: Leonard Liggins (Barking), R. G. Sayell, J. Bailey (Watford).

Midland Division: D. Packer (Birmingham).

South Coast Division: Miss E. Farnley, Miss G. Saysell, Mr. S. Beagley (Portsmouth).

Yorkshire Division: **Associates:** Miss Bray (Leeds), Miss E. Hawson, Miss E. Oates (York).

SOUTH COAST.

FORTHCOMING MEETING.

The Autumn meeting of the South Coast Division will be held at Worthing on Wednesday, October 10th. Arrangements have been made whereby Members attending it may join an outing of the Worthing Archaeological Society which is taking place on that date.

PROGRAMME.

2.30 p.m.—Motor coaches leave Museum. Fare, 2s. 6d.

3.30 p.m.—Rev. C. H. Prichard, M.A., Rector of Wiston, will conduct the visitors to Wiston Church, and afterwards to Buncton Chapel. (Wiston Church lies almost within the shadow of Wiston House, which formerly was one of the seats of the ancient family of Shirley. It is of early date, and contains some interesting monuments, and a famous 15th century brass. Buncton is in the same parish, and was at one time a Roman settlement. Its little chapel is of Norman date, and is of great architectural and historical interest.)

5.15 p.m.—Tea at Wiston (members of the S.C.D. will be the guests of the Worthing Library Staff).

6 p.m.—Coaches return to Worthing.

7 p.m.—Committee meeting.

7.30 p.m.—Evening meeting, to be held in the Art Gallery, when a lantern lecture, entitled "Sussex Wild Life," will be given by Mr. William Law (of the Brighton Public Library). The chair will be taken by Miss Marian Frost, F.L.A., Chief Librarian of Worthing.

The hours mentioned in this programme will be strictly adhered to.

Members intending to be present should notify the undersigned not later than Friday, October 5th.

Worthing Public Library.

GRACE L. DEAN,
Hon. Secretary.